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ELEMENTS OF MAGIC IN THE ROMANCE OF WILLIAM OF PALERNE.

ABOUT the year 1350, at the command of Sir Humphrey Bohun, the French *Roman de Guillaume de Palerne* was translated into English by one William, of whom we know nothing but this name. The translator was unusually faithful to his original, omitting nothing essential and making no important addition; though he greatly increased the poetic merit of the whole by adding, here and there, some bit of description or character portrayal, as unusual in the romances of the fourteenth century as the fresh humor which is William's undying charm.

Of the origin of the French *Roman* we know nothing. Sir F. Madden in his preface to the first modern edition of the English poem¹ makes the suggestion that the story was founded "on some Italian tradition picked up by the Norman adventurers in Apulia and Sicily;" thus taking for granted that in the French poem² of the last quarter of the twelfth century we have the earliest version of this delightful and unusual little romance.

It would seem necessary, before turning to the discussion of the subject of this paper, to give a brief synopsis of the story embodied in both versions of the romance. Short portions of the first part of the English version are missing, so that it is necessary to supply the corresponding parts from the French. As the stories are identical, however, in all other parts, it is both safe and easy to use the original version.

Although William of Palerne bears the title rôle in this romance, he is not, in my opinion, the real hero of the story. Alphouns, the Werwolf, who does, in fact, appear in the second title of the English poem, is undoubtedly its most interesting, indeed its central, character. His story is briefly as follows: His father was the king of Spain, a just and kindly man. At Alphouns's birth his mother died, and in course of time the king married

¹ Quoted in the Introduction to the Early English Text Society edition, Extra Series I, p. xiv.

² Société des Anciens Textes Français, ed. H. MICHELANT, 1876.

again. The new queen was a woman renowned for her occult wisdom and the power of her magic charms. She seemed, for a time, merely indifferent to the boy Alphouns; but, after the birth of a son, she grew jealous on his behalf and determined to remove the king's elder son from her boy's path to the throne. By means of a magic salve and charms she transformed Alphouns, therefore, to a werwolf, who, realizing his plight, very naturally rushed at the queen—

And hent her so hetterly to have hire astrangled
 Pat hire deth was neiz diȝt to deme pe sope.¹

At her cries he fled, and thus began his many years of wandering, in his strange disguise.

One day Alphouns came to Sicily, and there discovered that the baby heir to the throne, William of Palerne, was about to be slain at the command of his wicked uncles. He seized the child, bore him across to Italy, and at last left him in the care of a kindly cowherd living near Rome.

For seven years the little William, always watched from a distance by his rescuer, lived happily with his foster parents. Then the werwolf, thinking it time his protégé should be advanced and educated, led the emperor of Rome, whom he found opportunely hunting in the forest, to the spot where William was tending his kine. Charmed with the unusual beauty of the boy, the emperor took him home and placed him under the care of his little daughter, Melior. The two, growing up together—always, though they knew it not, under the eye of the “witty werwolf”—not unnaturally fell in love, and, at last, upon the eve of a projected marriage between Melior and a Greek prince, ran away together, disguised by their clever little friend Alexandrine as two white bears.

Upon their arrival in the forest, the werwolf claimed them as his charge, and led the lovers—quite unconscious of his maneuvers—back to Sicily, William's native land. After many adventures and hair-breadth escapes from the eager pursuit, the pair reached the island, constantly guided, provided for, and consoled by their four-footed friend. Finding his mother and sister besieged by the king of Spain, William, without knowledge of his

¹ Ll. 150, 151.

relationship to them, at once espoused their cause, and, with a werwolf as device upon his shield, overthrew all that opposed him and reduced the king, not only to subjection, but to imprisonment.

Alphouns, the werwolf, who had meanwhile been absent, now reappeared and by his curious motions and obeisances before his father, the king of Spain, led him to think of his lost son and the rumors concerning his transformation into a werwolf. His step-mother, the queen, being promptly summoned, aroused a murderous rage in Alphouns, who was with difficulty restrained by William from rushing upon her at once. In terror, she confessed her guilt and her present readiness to make amends; retired with the werwolf, now quieted, and by means of a ring tied with a red thread about his neck, and the usual charms, restored him to humanity in the shape of a naked man. The story ends with the marriage of Alphouns to William's sister, Florence, of William to Melior, of the clever Alexandrine to Alphouns's half-brother, Braundins; the return of all to their homes; and, finally, the election of William, after the death of his father-in-law, to the empire of Rome.

Apart from its literary excellence, the characteristic which distinguishes this romance, as outlined above, and gives it a place all its own among the non-cyclic romances, is the great prominence it gives (1) to the element of magic, especially as expressed in the transformations of men into animals, and (2) to the influence of prophetic dreams. No less than five dreams, bearing directly upon the story and influencing its development, are related at length. Two of these are caused by the magic of the witch-like Alexandrine, to promote the love affair of William and Melior.¹ Two are prophetic of immediately ensuing events, the one leading to the escape of William and Melior from their pursuers, the other acquainting them with events occurring at a distance,² and the fifth, that of the queen of Palerne, longest and most elaborate of all, foretells, not only the coming of William and Melior in their second disguise as deer, and William's conquest of her enemies, but her son's final triumph as emperor of Rome.

¹ Ll. 657-77, 862-70.

² Ll. 2293-2313, 3104-7.

More interesting than the dreams, however, are the three cases of men's transformation into animals presented in this poem: the change of Alphouns into a werwolf, the change of William and Melior into white bears, and their and the queen's final change into deer. It is true, the last two metamorphoses mentioned are spoken of in the poem merely as disguises: William and Melior, determined to escape together for the sake of their love, appeal to the crafty Alexandrine to aid them in their departure. Alexandrine, having procured two white bearskins from the kitchen, sews up the lovers in the skins and sends them off on all fours.¹

From this time until they change their disguise, William and Melior are most frequently mentioned by the poet as "the beres," and he seems throughout to lose consciousness of the fact that they had not actually undergone transformation.² The change from human to bear-nature was almost as common, especially in Germanic countries, as that to wolf-nature, as witness the Berserker of Scandinavia. A popular tradition of the sort, in which the transformation has been rationalized and Christianized (by the introduction of the devil!) is found in Grimm's "Berskin" Tale 101—where "Berskin" hardly retains any human characteristics during his seven years' compact with the Evil One. In this instance, as in that of the chief transformation in our poem, the werwolf, the man does not partake the character of the animal whose shape he assumes, but retains the better part of his human mind.

Having become notorious as bears, William and Melior, led always by the ready wisdom of their wolf-friend, reject the tell-tale white skins and assume those of a hart and hind, provided for them by Alphouns.³ This would seem to be mere repetition in another form and hardly worth remark, were it not for a curious bit of additional detail which appears to corroborate the theory that the disguises of this poem must have been, in some earlier form of the story, actual animal transformations. This additional bit of evidence consists in the account of how the queen of Palerne, having seen the hart and hind in her garden, and having learned, through her dream, that these were to be her deliverers, herself

¹ Ll. 1686-1744.

² See l. 2401 and elsewhere.

³ Ll. 2574-96.

put on a *deerskin* before going down to meet them.¹ Of course, this may be merely the elaboration of the poet, but it seems rather to bear the marks of early tradition. For why should the queen, if perfectly sure that the strangers were actual human beings, merely clothed in deerskins, not go to meet them in her proper costume? It seems an unanswerable question. If, on the other hand, the lovers were actually transformed into deer, they would very naturally be afraid of a human queen, but quite unaffrighted by one of the same form as themselves. To primitive conceptions it was perfectly natural that the queen should herself become a deer, in assuming the deerskin, in order the better to parley with her deer-transformed guests. The fact, too, that transformations into the forms of animals or birds were, from the earliest times, often accomplished for the sake of speed falls in with this theory.² Strength, represented by the bears, and speed, represented by the deer, were both necessary to bring the lovers, William and Melior, from Rome to their asylum in Sicily, and to enable them to escape the vigilant pursuit and the manifold dangers of their journey.

Whether William, Melior, and the queen were or were not originally transformed into the creatures whose skins they wore, however, we have an actual transformation here which forms the central interest of the story for students today, as it doubtless did for the less analytical readers on whose account it was first set down in French and English. The werwolf, Alphouns, is, as I have said above, without doubt the real hero of the romance, combining in himself most strangely the characteristics of victim and *deus ex machinâ*, of wild beast and guardian angel.

Mr. Kirby F. Smith, in "An Historical Study of the Werwolf in Literature,"³ mentions the *Lai de Bisclavret* and two other *lais* closely connected with it, as the only stories of the "constitutional werwolf" in which the author is on the side of the werwolf and enlists the sympathy of the reader on his behalf. We have in William a yet more conspicuous example of the glorifica-

¹ Ll. 3059-71, 3110-19.

² Cf. the story of the Swedish soldier Afzelius, UMGEWITTER, 2, 361, quoted by MR. K. F. SMITH, "The Werwolf," p. 23, note; also, p. 25. The gods of Scandinavia use the power of transformation "for the purpose of making rapid journeys."

³ *Publications of Modern Language Association*, New Series, Vol. II (1894).

tion of the man-beast. His type is that of those involuntarily transformed; but, even among stories of such guiltless victims, sympathy on the part of the author is exceedingly rare.

It will have been seen in the synopsis of the story, not only that the attitude of the author is very unusual, but that the character of the werwolf himself is almost unprecedented. In only two instances does Alphouns show a resemblance in nature to the traditional werwolf: in his two meetings with the step-mother who transformed him. The ferocity and thirst for blood and the horrible gruesomeness which are the traits of the man-wolf from time immemorial are entirely absent here. He is most often spoken of as the "witty werwolf," and even when deeds of violence would be perfectly natural, as in stealing food for William and Melior, he harms no one. He rushes not upon a man "wip a rude roring," but lets him escape unhurt save for a grisly fright. "His wit welt he euer," in the full sense that not only could he reason and calculate with a man's mind, but he could feel with a man's heart. He was, in fact, no more truly transformed than William and Melior when they donned the bearskins as a disguise. And it may be added here that the unusual rationalization and humanization of the acknowledged magic change from man to werwolf is an additional argument in favor of the bear- and deerskin changes being originally actual transformations also.

This unusual characterization of the werwolf might arise from one of two causes: either directly from the influence of the author of the French romance, or from the late form of the story as it came to him. Since we have nothing earlier than the French version, and since our English poem is a direct translation of that, it is impossible actually to decide between these alternatives. It seems more probable, however, since the whole plot of the story as we have it hinges on the character of the werwolf, that wherever the poet found it, he found it in substantially its present shape. Of course, it is easy to imagine that, in an earlier form of the tradition, the theft of William by the werwolf had no other motive than the satisfaction of the latter's hunger, and that the child was afterward rescued by the cowherd with whom he passed his boyhood. If, as I have suggested, the earlier story had really transformed

the lovers into bears, they would then be fitting companions for a werwolf and their journeyings together were not unnatural. In the dearth of facts, however, it is only possible to say that the character of the werwolf would of itself be sufficient to stamp this story as very late, and it is impossible to do more than guess at its primitive form.

Let us turn, now, to a discussion of the various classes of werwolves and to the place of Alphouns among them. I shall first consider three general types of werwolf-transformations—for it is by their transformations that the classes are distinguished—and then try to show that the widely spread and various stories of swan-transformations can be placed in corresponding categories.

Mr. Kirby Smith, in his article on the werwolf, to which I have already had occasion to refer, makes two general divisions under which the werwolf stories that have come down to us from all ages can be grouped; these are the "voluntary," or "constitutional," werwolf, and the "werwolf by magic." The distinction between the two is sharply drawn, but no possibility of a connection is considered. For the purposes of this paper it would seem better to make three divisions, all more or less connected, yet each clearly distinct. Before describing them, however, I must state the fact that the use of magic charms and ointments which often accompanies one or other method of animal transformation is not in any way distinctive of these methods, but belongs to the general province of folk-magic, and will not therefore be more particularly considered here. In every instance of transformation, as here in the case of Alphouns, the charms and ointments have probably been added at a late date, after a sophisticated system of magic had been developed.

To return: the first of my three types is that so ably discussed by Mr. Kirby Smith—the constitutional type, or werwolf-by-nature. Here the change from man-form to wolf-form is purely voluntary¹ and occurs either at the option of the wolf-man or at fixed time intervals. The only condition necessary to the change

¹"Voluntary" in the sense that, whether the change be periodic or not, *desire* for the change always precedes. The *wish* may recur at regular intervals, but, the nature of the man being twofold, the wish always precedes the act. Cf. *Lai de Bisclavret*.

is the removal of the man's clothes when he desires to become wolf, and his resumption of the same clothes to become man. Here the wolf-nature is distinctly predominant, and, as Mr. Smith says, the man is looked upon as "a demoniac wolf in disguise, a flimsy disguise which he may throw off at any moment." The best illustrations of this type are: the "Freedman's Tale" in Petronius, *Satire 61*, and the *Lai de Bisclavret* by Marie de France, both quoted by Mr. Kirby Smith. In the former a freedman sees a soldier, a friend of his, suddenly stop at a lonely place in the road, remove his clothes, emit a howl, and rush off into the woods in the form of a wolf. Later the freedman hears that a ravenous wolf has been among the cattle of another friend and has received a severe cut in the neck. On returning to the soldier's lodging, his friend finds him lying bathed in blood which pours from a great gash in his neck. The conclusion is evident: the man is a voluntary,¹ constitutional werwolf, and an object of horror ever after.

In Marie's *lai* a husband is guilty of frequent and mysterious absences from home, recurring at regular intervals. His wife, evidently acquainted with the habits of werwolves, having wormed from him the admission that he possesses the hated dual nature, begs him to tell her where he hides his clothes. After much hesitation he reveals the secret hiding-place, and to his sorrow. For when next the desire for transformation comes upon him, his wife follows him, steals his clothes, and leaves him powerless to regain his human shape. Afterward, by the intervention of King Arthur, he is restored and his unfaithful wife punished.²

The second method of transformation is that called "Teutonic" in Mr. Smith's article. The process is just the reverse of the former one. A man becomes a werwolf by putting on a "wolf-shirt"—or later a wolfskin girdle—and returns to human shape by removing it. Here, as in the first type, the change is usually voluntary, and occurs at either regular or irregular inter-

¹ See note on preceding page.

² See, in connection with this *lai*, the interesting article of PROFESSOR G. L. KITTREDGE appended to his recent edition of "Arthur and Gorlagon," a Latin version of a Welsh-Irish werwolf tale. The four versions of *The Werwolf's Tale* with which he deals all belong to the "constitutional" type with more or less admixture of later magic (*Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, Vol. VIII, pp. 149 ff.).

vals.¹ It is usually periodic, the periods often connected with the number nine. In this type the human nature, on the whole, predominates, even though, as in the case related in the *Volsunga Saga* (chaps. 5-8), the werwolves are wolves for longer periods than they are men. Mr. Smith quotes this latter story. Sigmund and Sinfjötli "fared forth into the forest after spoil; and they came upon a house, and two men with great gold rings were sleeping therein. They were at the time free from a great ill, for wolf-shirts were hanging upon the wall above them; every tenth day they might get out of those shirts." Sigmund and Sinfjötli, having put on the shirts, found themselves unable to return to human form, and rushing forth into the forest, gave themselves up to ravage and murder for the prescribed nine days. Then they returned, burned the skins, and so relieved themselves and the king's sons of the fatal temptation to lead the wolf-life.

An Armenian story, into which later religious ideas have been introduced, shows the same fundamental characteristics. A woman, for her sins, is condemned to wander seven years as a wolf. A spirit robes her in wolf-clothes, which arouse in her wolf-appetites. She devours first her own children and those of her relatives, then the children of strangers. She rages only at night. When morning comes, she returns to her human shape and carefully conceals her wolfskin. Hertz says that this legend is so closely related to European, especially Slavic, werewolf legends that it almost seems as if it must have wandered into Armenia from Russia or Greece.²

The third type of transformation is distinguished from the first two by the fact that, in the large majority of cases, it is brought about by the power of some person other than the werewolf, and against his will. The change both to and from the wolf-form is accomplished by means of a ring or necklace, *i. e.*, a magic circle, usually of gold. It is not periodic, therefore, and frequently the man, once transformed, remains wolf to his death. A good illustration of this method is a story taken from the

¹ In these stories, however, it is taken for granted that *whoever* puts on the "wolf-shirt" will become wolf, while in the case of the first class the gift of change, depending on a dual nature, is purely personal.

² W. HERTZ, *Der Werwolf*, p. 27.

German-Jewish *Maase Buch*.¹ In this story a rabbi sees one day a curious-looking weasel with a large gold ring in its mouth. He captures the weasel, obtains the ring, and finds it to be a magic talisman capable of granting his wishes. All this he tells his wife, but keeps the ring from her. At last, and of course, she discovers the ring and gains possession of it. In revenge, probably, for her goodman's lack of confidence in her, she promptly uses the powers of the captured ring to turn him into a wolf. He leaps out of the window and makes for the forest. The erewhile harmless rabbi now becomes a pest to the entire neighborhood, killing the cattle, threatening men's lives, and ravaging as no mere wolf could ravage. The king sets a price on his head, and a famous knight starts out to take him. When he reaches the depths of the forest he meets the wolf and struggles with it. Almost overcome, he resorts to prayer, and the wolf falls fawning at his feet. The knight having obtained the promised prize, the wolf remains with him till, one snowy day, he discovers the beast *writing Hebrew* with his paw on the snow. He hurries back to town, secures the king, and returns to the forest, where the wolf is awaiting him, his whole story scratched out upon the ground. The wicked wife is, of course, sought at once and the ring procured. When it has been placed upon the paw of the wolf, the witnesses see a wolf no longer, but the man restored to his humanity.

In this third division—of involuntary werwolves—must be placed our werwolf, Alphouns, who, though apparently made werwolf by magic salves only, no ring being mentioned, is restored to human form through a combination of ring and necklace.

A noynment anon sche made: of so grete strengpe
 bi enchaunmens of charmes: pat euil chaunche hire tide,
 pat whan pat womman per-wyzt: hadde pat worpi child
 ones wel an-oynted þe child: wel al a-bowte
 he wex to a werwolf wyztly per-after
 al þe making of man so mysse hadde ȝhe schaped.²

¹ Earliest known edition, Basel, 1602; quoted by REINHOLD KÖHLER in the Introduction to the "*Lais de Marie de France*," *Bibliotheca Normantica*, Vol. III, pp. lxxix, lxxx.

² *William of Palerne*, E. E. T. S. Ex. Ser., I, ll. 136-41.

But at the last, when compelled to redress the wrong she had committed:

pan rauzt sche forp a ring: a rich and a nobul.
 pe ston pat peron was stijt was of so stif vertu
 pat neuer man upon mold: mizt it him on haue
 ne schuld he with wiccheecraft be wicched neuer-more.
 * * * * * * * *
 pat riche ring ful redily with a red silk prede
 pe quen bond als bliue a-boute pe wolwes necke.
 sepe feipli of a forcer a fair bok sche rauzt.
 & radde peron redli rijt a long while
 so pat sche made him to man,¹

a naked man, as almost all werwolves seem to become when freed from the wolf-nature.

Of course, there are endless combinations of these types with each other and with other methods of magic, as shown by the salve and the magic book in *William*. All probably represent some confusion or combination of stories, and all are comparatively late. Even the story of Sigmund and Sinfjötli, one of the earliest of the Teutonic tales of werwolves that have come down to us, may be a combination of Types II and III, since it is expressly stated that the men who lay asleep with the wolf-shirts hanging above them had "great gold rings" on their fingers. Again, we have a combination of Type I, the constitutional werewolf, with the ring type, III, in the *Lai de Mélion*, where the hero removes his clothes, but must also be touched with his magic ring before he can assume werewolf shape, and touched with it again before he can return to human form.²

It was in trying to fix the position of Alphouns among his werewolf brethren that I was led to make the foregoing distinctions, with the results that shall be summed up later on. Having settled the predominating types of werwolves, in the three chief divisions that I have described and illustrated, I was struck with the fact (hinted by Mr. Kirby Smith in a general statement that the Scandinavians worked out a complete theory of transforma-

¹ *Op. cit.*, ll. 4424-34.

² See Introduction by R. KÖHLER to "*Lais de Marie de France—Bisclavret*," *Bibliotheca Normannica*, Vol. III, pp. lxxvi-lxxviii.

tions—but not in any way developed or illustrated by him) that the swan-transformation stories and legends, which, in various forms, are interwoven in the romances of the Middle Ages, would fall into exactly parallel classes—even including that first class which Mr. Kirby Smith makes *sui generis* and quite unparalleled in literature or legend.

Under the first method of transformation come the stories recorded by Grimm that represent the folk-tales corresponding to the "Schwann-Ritter Saga." In these the children who have become swans must put on *shirts* to become human children again. The mere throwing of the human garments about them transforms them at once to human shape. The detail that, in most cases, the shirts are required to be of a special sort, made after a magic formula—as in the story where the small sister must weave the shirts of nettles gathered by night in a churchyard, and must neither speak nor laugh during the seven years of the weaving—all this is mere late addition of folk-magic, designed to heighten the effect of the tale.¹

In the second category fall the legends of the swan maidens, the valkyrie, who for the sake of speed assume the swan-mantles for which they are specially distinguished. One of the most charming of the stories about them is that into which Wayland has also been introduced.² Wayland, following a hind that appears suddenly before him, is led to a fountain in the midst of the forest. Presently to this fountain come three swans (another version says three doves), who transform themselves into beautiful women by the removal of their swan-mantles, or clothes, and, leaving these on shore, step into the fountain to bathe. Wayland possesses himself of their garments, and so has the maidens in his power. In the one story he lets two of the swans escape, keeping the third for his wife; in the other, the "Volundarkviða," where he is joined by his two brothers, each takes one and forces her to marry him. The point of the story lies in the fact that the

¹ See BRÜDER GRIMM, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Berlin, 1870), Tale 49, p. 191. Compare HANS ANDERSEN, "The White Swans;" also GRIMM, Tale 9, p. 37, "Die zwölf Brüder"—a similar story.

² See "Friedrich von Schwaben" and "Volundarkviða," quoted by SCHOFIELD, "The Lays of Graelfent and Lanval," *Publications of Modern Language Association*, New Series, Vol. VIII (1900), pp. 134, 135.

moment the swan-mantles are removed their owners become human, and they cannot possibly resume their bird-forms without regaining and assuming the mantles.

In one of the swan-boy legends, also, the boys return to their swan-shapes by means of swan-shirts which they have removed to become human. In this case, since the boys are enchanted, they can remove their feather-clothing only at fixed intervals—during the night—and are compelled to resume it, even against their wills, at daybreak.¹

But the method of transformation that is most frequently used in the versions of the swan-knight story is that third method that depends upon the magic circle of gold, in this case represented by a necklace. The six little boys, all born at one time in the forest, excite the envy of the wicked queen, their grandmother, by the gold necklaces found upon their necks. When the necklaces are stolen from them, all become swans, and remain in that form until, years afterward, the necklaces are restored. The one little swan-boy whose necklace has been melted up, and the magic thus destroyed, never becomes human.² In one swan-maiden story also the maiden's necklace is mentioned, and though it is not directly connected with the transformation, in some older version it is altogether probable that it figured more prominently.

Perhaps the last-named story would stand best as a combined type, like some of the *Märchen* of the swan-children, where the boys, transformed by their wicked grandmother, can be brought back to their rightful shape only through the shirts woven by the little sister whose necklace is mentioned as her most precious possession. Since no adequate reason appears to explain why the little girl did not become a swan with her brothers, perhaps it is

¹ *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, Tale 49, p. 193.

² In English, *The Romance of the Chevalere Assigne*, ed. H. H. GIBBS, Early English Text Society, Extra Series 6, 1868; prose version, *Helyas Knight of the Swan*, printed by Robert Copland early in the sixteenth century, ed. THOMS, 1858. The earliest version of the story known to exist is in the Latin romance by the monk JEAN DE HAUTE SEILLE (JOHANNES DE ALTA SILVA), entitled *Dolopathos siue de Rege et Septem Sapientibus*, twelfth century, ed. OESTERLEY, 1873. There are several French versions, the first directly from *Dolopathos* by the poet HERBERT, twelfth century, "Naissance du Chevalier au Cygne," ed. in the *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, Vol. IV (1889); *Chanson du Chevalier au Cygne et de Godefroy de Bouillion* (so-called *Elie* version), ed. HIPPEAU (Paris, 1874), etc. Cf. WAGNER's *Lohengrin* for modern treatment of the story.

not too presumptuous to assume that here, as in the more elaborate romance versions of the story, the necklace proved an effective charm to keep its owner human.

We have seen, then, that both werwolf stories and swan stories—the best-known and most widespread examples of the human-animal transformation idea—may be grouped in three general classes. The first class accomplishes its transformation simply by the removal of human clothes, and by the resumption of these same clothes. A dual nature is presupposed. Ordinarily there is no fixed time at which the metamorphosis takes place. The change is usually voluntary. The man becomes wolf when and where he pleases, and returns to the human shape when his wolf-passions are appeased. The swan-boys, on the other hand, have been cursed with the swan-shape and cannot return to their true form at will. The wolf story, in this instance, is probably the more primitive. Definite time limits, such as are imposed in the “Lai de Bisclavret,” are probably a later addition also.¹

The second class comprises the transformations by means of the skins of animal or bird—when the skins assumed are removed their wearers return to human shape. The change may be voluntary or involuntary; forced upon the man by a curse, or assumed at his own discretion and for a special purpose. The human nature here is uppermost, as is the animal nature in the first class, the power to transform it lying, as before, in the clothes assumed. Here the change is more frequently periodic than not, as we saw in the case of the swan-children who were boys by night, swans by day, and in that of the *Sigmund* story, where the periods were nine days long.

Lastly, the third class covers all those legends in which voluntary—or involuntary—change to wolf or swan is caused by the use of a magic circle of gold—ring or necklace—with or without accompanying charms.

What, now, is the relative age of these three classes of transformations? Undoubtedly, Class I, in its *oldest* form a purely voluntary constitutional type,² in which only the removal and

¹ Cf. KIRBY SMITH.

² In many versions coming under this type the change is due to a curse, inherited or incurred by the man himself, and so is *involuntary*, occurring periodically at definite inter-

resumption of human clothes are necessary to accomplish the change of shape, is the most ancient.¹ For, in the first place, it is the simplest in device, thus agreeing with the principle that, the farther back we go, the simpler do beliefs and legends become; the older they are, the less are they burdened with detail. Again, it shows a primitive belief in the weakness of the division between man and the lower animals, and in the ease with which the line may be crossed by one and the other. Finally, it is not only the simplest, but the most perfect expression of the underlying idea, in at least all the werwolf transformation stories, of the duality existing in the very nature of the man-wolf; that duality which, more than all his acts of ferocity while in the wolf-form, has rendered him an object of hatred and grisly horror from the oldest times until now.

The relative ages of the second and third types are harder to determine. The magic-circle type is not necessarily the latest. For this idea of a magic circle is very ancient. Possibly this, once a general formula for changes of all kinds, may have come to be used for changes in form and nature between man and animals as early as the use of the actual skins of animals—or earlier. On the face of it, however, the use of the skins of the birds or animals themselves appears more primitive. It is a case of the appearance making the man: as, in the first type, one puts on human clothes to become human, so, in the second, one puts on animal clothes, and with them the nature and attributes represented by them in the popular imagination. As Mr. Kirby Smith says:² “The reasoning is simple and clear to the primitive mind—put on the wolf-shape, you become wolf.” In the same way, assume the feathers of a swan, you are swan—with, of course, traces of the original nature remaining. A later age, with its more sophisticated ideas of magic, finds insufficient causation in the old stories, and the most widely used instrument of its magic, the *ring*, is introduced as a result.

vals of time. But in the *most ancient* form of the legend the change would seem to have depended on the man's own will, and so may be classed as purely voluntary. Cf. KIRBY SMITH, as before.

¹Cf. KIRBY SMITH, “The Werwolf,” pp. 39, 40.

²“The Werwolf,” p. 40.

The primitive form of the werwolf stories which group themselves in classes I and II, as compared with that of those in Class III, corroborates the belief in the comparative lateness of the latter. Moreover, in the case of the swan-series, we find the *Märchen* and folk-tales going into Classes I and II with, if anything, only a trace of the ring idea; while the romances, in all cases less primitive, group themselves in Class III.

The werwolf story embodied in *William of Palerne*, therefore, falls into what is probably the least primitive class of transformations, and its nearest parallel is found in the romance of the swan-knights. The fact that the ring, in Alphouns's case, is not used as a ring upon the finger, but is suspended by a cord about his neck, makes him the more nearly akin to the knights whose necklaces were necessary to their lives as men. Their stories in general, too, are similar. Like them, he suffered from the wrath of a witch in his father's household; like them, he wandered far and wide in his transformed shape; like them, he performed services of kindness wherever he went; and, like them, was finally restored to humanity through the golden circle. Though inhabiting a form which carried with it suggestions of wickedness and horror beyond expression, he seems to me fully worthy to stand in our affections side by side with those darlings of romance.

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NOTE.—A transformation analogous to a combination of Classes I and II of the werwolf transformations has been pointed out to me by Professor F. I. Carpenter in STRAPAROLA's *Nights* (English edition, Vol. I, pp. 58-64). The story is as follows: Galeotto, king of Anglia, had a very beautiful wife named Ersilia. Their union was perfect but for one thing—the lack of children. One day Ersilia fell asleep in the forest, and while she slept three fairies came and blessed her. One said she should never fear, and should have a son. The second endowed this son with great gifts of mind and character. The third said he should be born in the shape of a pig, and should retain that form until he had thrice wedded a beautiful maiden.

In process of time the prince was born. Great was the horror of king and queen when they beheld his shape. His mother loved him, however, and he was allowed to run at will over the palace, even after wallowing in the mud of the street. One human gift he possessed—that of speech.

When the pig-prince had attained to years of manhood, he came one day to his mother and demanded a wife; and so violent did he become, when his request was refused, that the king and queen were forced to consider some means of agreeing to his demand.

There was a poor widow in the country who had three beautiful daughters. Her they summoned and asked the eldest of the girls for their son. Reluctantly the mother consented. The daughter was brought to the palace and wedded to the pig-prince. But at

night, when she saw him come in covered with mud, she plotted with herself how to kill him. He heard her whispered words, and rushing upon her slew her in her bed.

Some time after he again demanded a wife. The widow's second daughter, who had married him, like her older sister, in the hope of murdering him and succeeding to his wealth, met with the first wife's fate.

Once more Prince Pig demanded a spouse, and this time so violently that the queen went trembling to the widow to beg the hand of her third and youngest daughter for her terrible son. Gladly and humbly the young girl consented. With great gentleness and show of affection she called the prince to her and bade him lie on a fold of her gorgeous bridal gown. With patience she awaited his return at night, and lovingly summoned him to her side. What was her astonishment to see him strip off the loathsome hide of the pig and stand before her a radiantly beautiful naked prince. By day he continued for some time to assume the pigskin, by night his human form. At last, however, he was freed from the charm, and king, queen, and people rejoiced in his release.

Here we see indicated several characteristic points of the general transformation formula: (1) The prince possesses the dual nature, for while he retains the swine-shape he has the swinish desires of wallowing and gluttony. (2) He has certain murderous instincts which ally him with the werewolves, though in this instance justified as self-defense. (3) After his marriage with the youngest daughter he can assume or remove the skin at will—a trait of the transformations under Type II. (4) His animal shape is the result of a curse laid upon his mother previous to his birth—a common circumstance among the stories under Type I. On the whole, his is a combination of Types I and II.

The gift of speech is not generally granted to transformed men while in their animal or bird shapes; e. g., Alphons communicates with William and Melior only by signs, the Jewish wolf by writing.

No doubt many other sporadic examples of transformation into the shapes of various animals could be adduced. Those given above, however, seem sufficient to establish the theory of three distinct yet interconnected types, under which may be grouped parallel stories at least from the swan and werewolf series of legends.